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The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I do not think that Government mean to show any disrespect to the hon. Member by returning that answer. But if the hon. Member wants to raise any other question he may do so after question time on some other day."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" Sir, it is said that the matter is within the discretion of the Member or the Minister concerned. I want to know, Sir, whether these Members do not consider themselves responsible to this House and to the public ? "

Depressed Classes.

Expenditure on certain tenements meant for certain Adi-Dravidas in the city.

* 297 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR : Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state the orders issued by the Government on the explanation of the officer responsible for the irregular and excessive expenditure on the tenements meant for the use of the Adi-Dravidas whose houses were burnt in the disturbances in the mill area in Madras in 1921 ?

A.—The Government accepted responsibility for the experiment and agreed with the Public Accounts Committee that, as the buildings were sold, no further action was needed.

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" I do not know how the fact that the buildings have been sold exonerate the officer's responsibility for this irregular and excessive expenditure and I want to know why the Government say that 'no further action is necessary'. "

11-45 a.m.

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" As the buildings have already been sold and the Government suffered no loss, no further action is necessary."

Allotment of funds for sinking and deepening wells.

* 298 Q.—Mr. R. VEERIAN : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state the amount of money the Commissioner of Labour, Madras, is going to allot for depressed classes for sinking and deepening wells in municipal and non-municipal areas separately for each district for the current year ?

A.—No funds have been allotted for the construction of wells in municipal areas. A statement [a] showing the distribution of funds for the sinking of wells, construction of pathways, provision of burial-grounds, etc., in non-municipal areas in the districts is laid on the table. In Madura and Coimbatore the amounts will be utilized only for the construction of wells ; but in other districts the amounts allotted will be utilized towards the provision of pathways, burial-grounds, etc., in addition. It is not possible to say how much will be spent on wells alone.

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" In the latter part of the answer it is stated that 'in Coimbatore and Madura the amounts will be utilized only for the construction of wells'. In the recently issued weekly report in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, we find that Madagasira is always suffering for want of drinking

[a] Printed as Appendix IV on page 544 infra.

water. May I therefore know what special allotment is going to be utilized for this place by the Government?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"I am unable to reply off-hand."

Mr. R. VEERIAN:—"On what basis the Government distribute their grants for sinking these wells?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"On the recommendation of the Labour Commissioner."

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU:—"Is it a fact that the Labour Commissioner in a recent instance allotted about Rs. 4,000 and odd for sinking wells for Adi-Dravidas in the Nellore district and he afterwards withdrew that amount?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"I want notice of the question."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR:—"May I know through whom the money is spent, through the taluk boards or any other agency?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"I want notice."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR:—"In view of the very distressing condition of some of the portions of some taluks of the Coimbatore district, may I request the hon. Member to see that the money granted is speedily spent?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"I shall do so."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU:—"Is it a fact that the amount allotted for digging well in a certain place was not spent although the depressed classes went there to dig the well and did the major part of the work themselves?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur:—"I shall look into the question."

Forests.

Increments to unpassed range clerks in Forest Department.

*299 Q.—Khan Bahadur HAJI ABDULLA HAJI QASIM SAHIB: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Conservator of Forests in his L. Dis. No. 9999/23, dated 8th February 1924, has allowed all the unpassed range clerks to rise up to Rs. 50?

A.—Proceedings L. Dis. No. 9999/23, dated 8th February 1924, were issued by the Chief Conservator of Forests and not by the Conservator. In those proceedings ten unpassed range clerks in the VI Circle who had previously been exempted by competent authority to hold permanent posts of clerks on specified rates of pay below Rs. 35 per mensem were permitted to draw increments up to Rs. 50 in the time-scale of Rs. 35—35—$1\frac{1}{2}$—50—1—60.